

Public Health COVID-19 Guidance: Commercial Seafood Industry in Washington State

Contents

Public Health COVID-19 Guidance: Commercial Seafood Industry in Washington State	1
Section 1: Introduction	2
<i>Scope of this guidance document</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Definitions for terms used in this document</i>	<i>3</i>
Section 2: Developing COVID-19 Policies and Procedures	6
Section 3: Education Plan for Workers	7
<i>Required COVID-19 workplace education topics</i>	<i>8</i>
Section 4: Pre-Embarkment & Pre-Deployment Quarantine	9
<i>Traveling to Washington from other states or countries: All workers</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Pre-Embarkment Quarantine for vessel crew and workers</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Pre-Deployment Quarantine for shore-based workers</i>	<i>11</i>
Section 5: Protecting & Screening Workers.....	12
<i>Protective measures: On vessels</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Protective measures: Shore-based processing facilities</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Daily screening: All work sites</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>Responding to symptomatic workers: On a vessel</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Responding to symptomatic workers: At a shore-based worksite</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Protecting the public</i>	<i>15</i>
Section 6: Testing for the Virus that Causes COVID-19	16
<i>Understanding COVID-19 test results</i>	<i>16</i>
<i>COVID-19 testing & public health</i>	<i>17</i>
Section 7: Responding to Cases of COVID-19	18
<i>Isolation</i>	<i>18</i>
<i>Quarantine</i>	<i>20</i>
<i>Cleaning and disinfection after a COVID-19 case is identified</i>	<i>22</i>

Section 8: Reporting Cases and Working with Public Health	23
<i>Background</i>	<i>23</i>
<i>How to report cases of COVID-19 by worksite</i>	<i>24</i>
Shore-based seafood facilities (processing and aquaculture).....	24
Commercial seafood vessel operators – Cases of COVID-19 during pre-embarkment quarantine.....	24
Commercial seafood vessel operators – Cases of COVID-19 during vessel operation when returning to a Washington Port.....	25
Working with public health.....	26
Section 9: Additional resources	26
<i>CDC and other federal guidance</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>Washington State Guidance</i>	<i>27</i>
More COVID-19 Information and Resources	28
Appendix A: Example “Line List” for reporting cases of COVID-19	29

Section 1: Introduction

The commercial seafood industry is a component of the critical infrastructure within the food and agriculture sector. Seafood workers are a fundamentally essential element of the industry’s operations. Several large outbreaks of COVID-19 on cruise ships and in other congregate settings have demonstrated the ease of transmission of COVID-19 in close quarters. More recently, a cluster of outbreaks on commercial fishing vessels occurred in Washington State. Outbreaks on commercial seafood vessels can threaten the health of workers, their families, and their communities; as well as the food supply and economic recovery for Washington State and beyond.

This document serves as public health guidance for Washington State seafood sectors on how to minimize the frequency and severity of outbreaks for its workers and employers. This document is also intended to be a framework for collaboration between the industry and state and local health authorities with the shared goal of mitigating virus transmission and preventing mortality from COVID-19.

Scope of this guidance document

This purpose of this guidance document is to address and recommend public health mitigation measures and best practices to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the Seafood industry. This document was produced by the Washington State (WA) Department of Health (DOH) and only contains public health guidance and jurisdictional requirements. Please consult other federal, state, and local regulatory authorities and divisions for recommendations and requirements that may not be outlined in this document. These include, but are not limited to, the United

States Coast Guard (USCG), Department of Labor (DOL), Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (LNI), and local health jurisdictions (LHJ). This document may provide references but is not comprehensive for other jurisdictional authorities.

This guidance covers a variety of seafood operations, which are categorized to include the following.

Seafood Vessels

- Catcher-Processor vessels – Vessels that both catch and process fish or other seafood and operate from or call upon ports in Washington State.
- Mothership Operations – Offshore processing vessels that operate from or call upon ports in Washington State. These vessels' operations include deliveries at-sea from catcher vessels.
- Catcher vessels with crews over 5 – Vessels that catch fish or other seafood and operate from or call upon ports in Washington State with crews larger than 5.

Shore-based Seafood Operations

- Shore-based seafood processors – Seafood processing facilities located within local jurisdictions in Washington State.
- Aquaculture Facilities – Seafood harvesting and processing facilities located within local jurisdictions in Washington State.

Definitions for terms used in this document

Asymptomatic case: People can have a COVID-19 infection and test positive without showing any symptoms of the illness. They can still transmit the infection. These infections are called asymptomatic cases.

Case investigation: A case investigation may be carried out by an LHJ or DOH to identify cases in a disease outbreak and to conduct contact tracing, among other activities.

Cleaning: To remove germs, dirt and other impurities from a surface; usually with soap and water.

Close contact: Someone is considered a [close contact](#) when they have spent a total of 15 minutes or longer within 6 feet of someone confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19 within a 24-hour period, starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the patient is isolated. This time period does not have to be consecutive – it can include multiple short exposures that add up to 15 minutes or more over the course of 24 hours. Importantly, as seen in multiple large COVID-19 outbreaks on cruise ships and seafood vessels, all crew and passengers on board should be considered a close contact.

Cloth masks or cloth face coverings: The CDC recommends that face coverings are fit properly and [recommends strategies](#) to improve mask fitting to more effectively slow the spread of COVID-19. These strategies include wearing a cloth mask over a medical procedure mask, knotting the ear loops of a medical procedure mask, using a mask fitter, or using a nylon covering over a mask. CDC recommends wearing a mask in all public settings combined with continued implementation of effective public health measures such as vaccination, physical distancing, hand hygiene, and isolation and quarantine. In [Washington State face coverings are required in public and in workplaces](#). These coverings do not replace PPE such as respirators that may be required for certain tasks in a workplace. Face shields may not be used in place of a mask or face covering. L&I has developed an occupational safety and health publication for choosing masks: [Which Mask for Which Task?](#)

Confirmed case: A confirmed case of COVID-19 occurs when a worker tests positive for COVID-19 with a ribonucleic acid (RNA), molecular-based test (PCR test), or 3 consecutive antigen tests administered 24 hours apart with at least one being positive. Other types of tests, such as antibody tests, may be less reliable and cannot be used to confirm a case of COVID-19.

Contact tracing: The process of interviewing a confirmed case to identify people who have been in close contact with a person who is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 during that person's infectious period (how long the person is sick and can transmit the virus – this will vary for each case).

COVID-19: Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness caused by a new virus called SARS-CoV-2. Symptoms can include a fever, cough, and shortness of breath, as well as other [symptoms](#). COVID-19 can range from very mild to severe; even people who do not show any symptoms can spread the virus. Some people become so sick they must be admitted to the hospital, and some people may die from the illness. The virus is thought to spread mainly from person to person:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about six feet or two meters).
- Through droplets and airborne particles formed when a person who has COVID-19 coughs, sneezes, sings, talks, or breathes. There is growing evidence that droplets and airborne particles can remain suspended in the air and be breathed in by others, and travel distances beyond 6 feet (for example – during choir practice, in restaurants, or in fitness classes). In general, indoor environments and other enclosed spaces without good ventilation increase this risk.
- By touching a surface that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or face.

COVID-19 Outbreak: DOH defines an outbreak of COVID-19 as the following:

Within the same location or worksite,

- 2 or more cases of COVID-19 (including at least one confirmed case, may include one or more probable cases).

- Occurring within a 14-day time period.
- With a likely link between the two (worked near each other, shared shifts or lunch breaks, shared housing, etc.).

Disinfecting: Disinfecting means using chemicals to kill germs that might be on a surface. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has a [list of disinfectants](#) that can be used to kill the virus that causes COVID-19.

Isolation and quarantine help protect the public by preventing exposure to people who do have or may have a contagious disease. **Isolation** separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick. **Quarantine** separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick.

Local Health Jurisdiction (LHJ): A local health jurisdiction is the local county or district agency providing public health services to persons within the area.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): Personal protective equipment, commonly referred to as PPE, is equipment worn to minimize exposure to hazards that cause serious workplace injuries and illnesses. Specific PPE is used to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Certain PPE may be needed in different spaces depending on the level of exposure to others. Examples of PPE include gloves, goggles, face shields, and respirators.

Physical distancing: Also known as social distancing, this is the practice of separating people so that they are at least 6 feet, or about 2 meters, apart.

Probable case: A probable case occurs when a person who has had close contact with a confirmed case shows symptoms of COVID-19 infection, defined by current [CDC guidelines](#).

Public Health Officer: The Health Officers of an LHJ have the legal authority to take the action needed to control and prevent the spread of any dangerous contagious or infectious diseases that may occur within their LHJ.

Quarantine: Separating persons who may have been exposed to an infectious disease from others to prevent transmission should they become infected. CDC and DOH recommend a 14-day quarantine period after a person is exposed to COVID-19. As an additional precaution, a 14-day quarantine is also recommended before the start of employment in certain industries.

- **Monitored Quarantine** is supervised directly by the representative or designee of the employer and occurs in a location away from home.
- **Controlled Quarantine** is conducted through employee-based instructions from the employer, but without direct supervision. Employees self-monitor and report any symptoms, but do not receive direct monitoring by the employer or designee.
- **Pre-Embarkment Quarantine** occurs when there is no known exposure to COVID-19. This quarantine is taken as a precautionary screening measure to prevent the

unintentional spread of COVID-19 into a workplace, such as a fishing or seafood processing vessel or a factory where physical distancing measures may not be possible.

- **Close Contact Quarantine** occurs after exposure to a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19. A close contact is defined as being within 6 ft, or about 2 meters, for a cumulative 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period of time.

Safe Transportation: Transportation where precautions must be taken to prevent COVID-19 transmission between workers and from workers to the public. Examples include to and from home, the work site or for medical care; as well as to and from employer-provided isolation or quarantine facilities.

SARS-CoV-2: A viral respiratory illness caused by a coronavirus called severe acute respiratory syndrome-associated coronavirus (SARS-CoV). The “2” refers to the second strain of the virus that emerged in 2019, which causes COVID-19 illness.

Testing for COVID-19: There are many types of tests available for COVID-19. Two types of tests can be used to confirm an active case of COVID-19: **molecular** and **antigen tests**. These are considered **diagnostic tests**.

- **The most commonly used molecular test is** Polymerase-Chain Reaction, or **PCR**. It is used to identify and bind to the genetic material of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 illness. PCR and molecular tests are used to diagnose cases of COVID-19.
- **Antigen** tests bind to proteins on the surface of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Antigen tests are also used to diagnose cases of COVID-19 infection.

Other types of tests:

- **Antibody tests** identify antibodies to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 illness. These tests may show evidence of prior infection with SARS-CoV-2. Antibody tests are not used to diagnose cases of COVID-19.

Section 2: Developing COVID-19 Policies and Procedures

1. Employers should identify at least one workplace COVID-19 coordinator. This could be a compliance officer, a health and safety manager, a human resources (HR) staff member, or other. This person should serve as the point of contact for LHJs, DOH, and other agencies.
2. Employers are encouraged to develop flexible, non-punitive sick leave policies so that workers are not incentivized to conceal or not report symptoms.
3. Employers should develop a written COVID-19 policy/plan for each vessel or worksite. This plan should address the following:
 - a. COVID-19 education for all employees or potential employees ([Section 3](#)).

- b. Develop pre-embarkation 14-day quarantine plan for all vessel workers, including at least one diagnostic test at the end of the quarantine period and plans for reporting should a positive case occur ([Section 4](#), [6](#) and [8](#)).
 - c. Consider developing a Pre-Employment Quarantine plan for shore-based workers who travel to WA for employment ([Section 4](#)). Note that some workers who travel from other countries for work in WA may need to complete quarantine and have a negative COVID-19 test upon arrival.
 - d. Plans for screening for and managing sick workers ([Section 5](#), [7](#), and [8](#)).
 - e. Plans for testing of workers ([Section 5](#) and [6](#)).
 - i. At the end of monitored quarantine.
 - ii. For any workers who become symptomatic while working on a vessel or other worksite.
 - iii. Testing for asymptomatic workers after any contact occurs with anyone outside of the pre-embarkment quarantined crew of the same vessel. This can include vendors, crew changes, contact with other crews and mechanics.
 - iv. Testing for the crew if a positive case occurs within the crew or with someone who had contact with the crew within their infectious period.
 - f. Identify isolation quarters for vessel workers or crew ([Section 7](#)).
 - g. Identify isolation and quarantine facilities on land ([Section 7](#)).
 - h. Include directions for reporting sick or confirmed cases of COVID-19 to the appropriate health authorities ([Section 8](#)).
4. The CDC has developed [specific guidelines](#) for Protecting Seafood Processing Workers from COVID-19.

Section 3: Education Plan for Workers

In order to reduce opportunities for transmission of COVID-19 in the workplace, employers should provide education to all workers about COVID-19 symptoms, ways to prevent the spread, and vessel policies aimed at protecting workers and stopping the spread. Employers should work with their LHJs to utilize currently available education materials and posters – see education resources in [Section 9](#) of this guidance. Workers whose native language is not English should be provided educational resources in a language that they can understand. Educational materials should be available in culturally and linguistically appropriate formats, including information in formats for low-literacy workers (for example, using images with limited text).

Visit the [DOH website for COVID-19 educational materials](#) in [26 languages](#). DOH has a COVID-19 Community Engagement Task Force which can provide additional resources and guidance if needed: doh-cetf@doh.wa.gov. More information and resources can be found on the [Washington State Coronavirus Response \(COVID-19\)](#) website.

Please check with other jurisdictions such as US DOL, WA L&I and LHJs for additional requirements within these recommendations for individual worksites.

Required COVID-19 workplace education topics

1. COVID-19 symptoms and when employees should seek medical help.
2. How COVID-19 is spread.
3. How an infected person can spread COVID-19 to others even when they are not sick.
4. The employer's plan for screening workers for COVID-19. Encourage employees to report symptoms as soon as they develop.
5. Employer's sick leave policies.
6. How employees can protect themselves and prevent the spread of COVID-19 at the work site, including any new equipment, procedures, or policies created to limit the spread of COVID-19 at the work site.
7. Proper hand hygiene in the work site and at home:
 - a. When employees arrive and before they start their shift.
 - b. Before and after eating or using the toilet.
 - c. After close interaction with other persons.
 - d. After contacting shared surfaces or tools.
 - e. Before and after wearing a mask or gloves.
 - f. After blowing nose, coughing or sneezing.
8. Explain that alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be used if a sink or hand-washing station is not immediately available. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer is as effective as washing hands with soap and water, unless hands are visibly soiled.
9. The importance of physical distancing from others at work and at home.
10. How to properly use cloth face coverings and what they do, including:
 - a. Recommendation that everyone should wear cloth face coverings when around other people; including at work, while using shared transportation and when out in the community.
 - b. Cloth face coverings can help protect the people around the user of the cloth face covering when combined with physical distancing and frequent hand washing.
 - c. Cloth face coverings are not protective equipment and do not protect the person wearing a cloth face covering from COVID-19.
 - d. How to properly wear cloth face coverings so that they are [effective as defined by the CDC](#). This includes strategies to improve mask fitting to more effectively slow the spread of COVID-19. These strategies include wearing a cloth mask over a medical procedure mask, knotting the ear loops of a medical procedure mask, using a mask fitter, or using a nylon covering over a mask. CDC recommends wearing a mask in all public settings combined with continued implementation of effective public health measures such as vaccination, physical distancing, hand hygiene, and isolation and quarantine.
 - e. Cloth face coverings should be washed and dried daily between usages.
 - f. Cloth face coverings should be replaced with a clean mask or face covering when they become wet or soiled.
 - g. Employer policy for cloth face coverings, including how to request face coverings at the worksite if a new one is needed during the workday.

- h. Employer should include information about when a cloth face covering is sufficient and when a higher level of protection, like a respirator, should be used. This should include information about what a respirator is, and the differences between respirators and cloth face coverings.
 - i. At times on a vessel a face covering may be removed due to communication safety needs such as in hazardous weather on deck and verbal communication is necessary for essential safety.
- 11. Signage and other visual markers on the jobsite to remind workers of key policies and procedures.

Section 4: Pre-Embarkment & Pre-Deployment Quarantine

Seafood processing companies should make every effort to ensure that workers on seafood vessels and at shore-based processing facilities do not expose other workers or community members to COVID-19. This is best ensured by a combination of Quarantine (this section), Screening ([Section 5](#)) and Testing ([Section 6](#)).

Traveling to Washington from other states or countries: All workers

Workers who travel to WA from another state or country to begin employment on any vessel or shore-based processing facility should:

1. Wear a cloth face covering or surgical mask that are [fit properly](#) while traveling to WA via any means of conveyance, except when driving alone in a personal vehicle. Cloth face coverings or surgical masks should be worn at all times except when eating, drinking, or bathing.
2. Upon arrival to WA, workers should report immediately to the quarantine facility or other designated site for pre-employment screening activities.
3. Workers should adhere to recommendations and mandates related to control of COVID-19 established by LHJs, the State of Washington and the US federal government. These may include physical distancing requirements, [mask mandates](#), worker safety regulations and [prohibition of large gatherings](#).
4. Ensure that any worker who travels to WA from another country follows any country-specific quarantine and testing requirements currently in place in WA as listed here: <https://coronavirus.wa.gov/travelers-commuters>.

Pre-Embarkment Quarantine for vessel crew and workers

Before any crew or worker boards a seafood vessel at the start of a season (see [Section 1](#) for [definitions of vessels](#) and [types of quarantine](#)), employers should:

1. Require a 14-day quarantine for all workers who will be working on the vessel. This includes the Captain, Mate(s), medical officer(s), engineers, processors, and other workers, as well as third-party observers.
2. Monitored Quarantine at a designated facility is the preferred quarantine method for this work group.

3. If workers undergo a Monitored Quarantine, individual rooms are the preferred and safest option.
4. If workers must be quarantined together, avoid creating quarantine groups of more than ten workers in congregate quarantine settings (such as bunk houses). L&I has a document that outlines [temporary housing standards for workers](#).
 - a. If one person in a quarantine group tests positive with a diagnostic test for COVID-19, all workers in this group will have to extend their quarantine period from the last day of contact with the person who tests positive for COVID-19.
 - b. Smaller quarantine groups limit the number of workers who must extend their quarantine time due to close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19.
5. If workers will undergo quarantine as a group, notify LHJs and DOH in advance of the arrival of workers that Pre-Embarkment Quarantine will be taking place, including how many workers and where they will be located. Email for notification: doh-outbreakcoord@doh.wa.gov and see LHJ for best local contact.
6. Ensure that employees receive education ([Section 3](#)) about COVID-19 and the reason for the quarantine. Printed information should be in the workers' preferred language and made accessible for low-literacy workers (using images with limited text, for example).
7. Conduct daily fever and symptom screening during quarantine, as described below ([Section 5](#)). Anyone who develops symptoms during this time should be tested with a molecular/PCR test or antigen test. If the antigen test is positive, the individual should be placed in isolation and confirmation testing should be completed immediately. The positive antigen test should be confirmed with a molecular/PCR test.
8. Test all employees for the virus that causes COVID-19 with a molecular/PCR test or antigen test at the start, middle and end of the 14-day quarantine, with the end test administered within 72 hours of the end of the quarantine period. If the antigen test is positive, the individual should be placed in isolation and confirmation testing should be completed immediately. The positive antigen test should be confirmed with a molecular/PCR test.
 - a. Employers may also decide to include additional tests, including:
 - i. Additional antibody testing – Antibody tests may be difficult to interpret. Positive antibody tests do not guarantee immunity to COVID-19 infection and antibody test results cannot be used to confirm a case of COVID-19, nor can they be used to make decisions about quarantine.
9. Do not allow anyone who tests positive or indeterminate with a molecular or PCR to board the vessel until after completing an appropriate isolation period. Do not allow anyone who tests positive or indeterminate with an antigen test to board the vessel until after completing a confirmatory negative molecular/PCR test.
10. Ensure that workers and potential workers maintain at least 6 feet (about 2 meters) of physical distance and wear cloth face coverings or surgical masks that are [fit properly](#) during testing activities. Test organizers should avoid bringing crowds of workers together for testing (for example, testing at worker's hotel or quarantine facility room rather than in a large meeting hall).
11. For new crew members joining the vessel mid-season, the above recommendations for Pre-Embarkment Quarantine apply.

12. For vessels that will be completing a Pre-Travel Entry Quarantine in WA and departing to Alaska, companies should ensure that the Pre-Embarkment Quarantine meets the State of Alaska's quarantine/travel requirements as described in [Health Order 5, Appendix 1](#).

Pre-Deployment Quarantine for shore-based workers

The following recommendations apply to people traveling to WA from other states or countries to work in an onshore seafood processing facility.

1. Recommend a 14-day Pre-Deployment Quarantine for all workers who will be working at the processing location.
2. Monitored quarantine at a designated facility is the preferred quarantine method for this work group. Controlled quarantine is also an option.
3. If workers will undergo a Monitored or Controlled Quarantine, providing individual quarantine rooms is the preferred and safest option.
4. If workers must be quarantined together, do not create quarantine groups of more than ten workers in congregate quarantine settings (such as bunk houses). L&I has a document that outlines [temporary housing standards for workers](#).
 - a. If one person in a quarantine group has a positive diagnostic test for COVID-19, all workers in this group will have to extend their quarantine period from the last day of contact with the confirmed case of COVID-19.
 - b. Smaller quarantine groups limit the number of workers who must extend their quarantine time because they are a close contact of a confirmed case of COVID-19.
5. If workers will undergo quarantine as a group, notify LHJs in advance of the arrival of workers that Pre-Deployment Quarantine will be taking place.
6. Ensure that employees receive education ([Section 3](#)) about COVID-19 and the reason for the quarantine. Printed information should be in the workers' preferred language and made accessible for low-literacy workers (for example, using images with limited text).
7. Conduct daily fever and symptom screening during quarantine, as described below ([Section 5](#)). Anyone who develops symptoms during this time should be tested with a molecular/PCR test or antigen test. If the antigen test is positive, the individual should be placed in isolation and confirmation testing should be completed immediately. The positive antigen test should be confirmed with a molecular/PCR test.
8. At a minimum, test all employees for the virus that causes COVID-19 with a PCR, molecular or antigen test at the END of the 14-day quarantine, administered within 72 hours of the end of the quarantine period. Test all employees who will be quarantining with others for the virus that causes COVID-19 with a PCR, molecular or antigen test at the START of their 14-day quarantine. If the antigen test is positive, the individual should be placed in isolation and confirmation testing should be completed immediately. The positive antigen test should be confirmed with a molecular/PCR test.
 - a. Employers may also decide to include additional tests, including:
 - i. A PCR, molecular or antigen test at the START of the 14-day quarantine.
 - ii. A PCR, molecular or antigen testing in the middle of the 14-day quarantine, for anyone who shows symptoms of COVID-19, or anyone

who has had close contact with someone who tests positive during the quarantine period. These test results should not be used to shorten the quarantine period.

- iii. Additional antibody testing – Antibody tests may be difficult to interpret. Positive antibody tests do not guarantee immunity to COVID-19 infection, and antibody test results cannot be used to confirm a case of COVID-19, nor can they be used to make decisions about quarantine.
 - b. Do not allow anyone who tests positive or indeterminate with a PCR or molecular come to work until after completing an appropriate isolation period. Do not allow anyone who tests positive or indeterminate with an antigen test to come to work until after completing a confirmatory negative molecular/PCR test.
9. Ensure that workers and potential workers maintain at least 6 feet (about 2 meters) of physical distance and wear cloth face coverings or surgical masks during testing activities. Test organizers should avoid bringing crowds of workers together for testing (for example, testing at worker’s hotel or quarantine facility room rather than in a large meeting hall).

Section 5: Protecting & Screening Workers

In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 on a vessel or at a shore-based worksite, employers should adopt protective measures to facilitate physical distancing and to promptly identify and isolate sick workers.

Protective measures: On vessels

Vessel ([as defined in the introduction](#)) captains should enact protective measures as appropriate to their vessel size and design in order to protect workers.

1. Ensure that the appropriate face coverings or masks that are [fit properly](#) are worn in all areas of the boat as required; except in sleeping quarters, while communicating in inclement weather where the face covering prevent essential safety communication, and while actively eating, drinking, or performing personal hygiene tasks.
 - a. Masks may be removed to facilitate conversation on deck, preferably while workers are greater than 6 feet (about 2 meters) apart. Masks must be returned to covering both the worker’s nose and mouth as soon as possible, especially upon entering any indoor or enclosed space.
 - b. Face shields alone do not protect workers from COVID-19 and are not an acceptable replacement for masks.
2. Encourage basic common hygiene practices, such as hand washing and respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.
3. Wherever possible, vessel captains should limit the number of workers allowed in operational spaces such as the wheelhouse and engine room.
4. Mess area:
 - a. If possible, stagger mealtimes to reduce the number of crew in the mess area.
 - b. If possible, add protective barriers in the mess area.

- c. Ensure access to hand sanitizer in the mess area.
- 5. Smoking is not recommended by DOH. If workers take smoke breaks, they must adhere to at least 6 feet of physical distance. Consider limiting breaks to 2 people at a time.
- 6. Enact enhanced cleaning procedures in the mess area, heads or bathrooms, and any other high-touch areas of the ship.
- 7. Reference CDC [guidelines](#) for Protecting Seafood Processing Workers from COVID-19.

Protective measures: Shore-based processing facilities

- 1. Ensure that the appropriate face coverings or masks that are [fit properly](#) are worn in all areas of the facility. Masks may only be removed while actively eating or drinking.
- 2. Encourage basic common hygiene practices, such as hand washing and respiratory etiquette, including covering coughs and sneezes.
- 3. Provide extra sinks, hand sanitizer dispensers, etc. to facilitate hygiene practices.
- 4. Wherever possible, allow for workers to have at least 6 feet (about 2 meters) of space between them in work areas, break areas, etc.
- 5. Where physical distancing is not possible, erect protective barriers, especially in areas where workers are facing each other at a close distance, such as on a packing line.
- 6. Use respirators when inside a room with 10 or more people where 6 feet of distance isn't possible.
- 7. Enact enhanced cleaning of high-touch surfaces in common areas such as restrooms, break rooms, etc.
- 8. Ensure [proper ventilation in the building](#).
- 9. Consider staggering work shifts, break times, etc. to reduce the number of people moving throughout the building at once.
- 10. Break areas:
 - a. If possible, stagger break times to reduce the number of crew in the break room.
 - b. If possible, provide outdoor seating areas to facilitate safe lunch breaks.
 - c. If possible, add protective barriers in the break room.
 - d. Ensure access to hand sanitizer in the break room.
- 11. Smoking is not recommended by DOH. If workers take smoke breaks, they must adhere to at least 6 feet of physical distance. Consider limiting breaks to 2 people at a time.
- 12. Reference CDC Guidelines for Meat and Poultry Processing Employers and Workers: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/meat-poultry-processing-workers-employers.html>.
- 13. Reference [L&I](#) and their recommendations and requirements for [food processing](#) and workers standards in these worksites.

Daily screening: All work sites

For all work settings, including vessels, offices, and other work sites, follow DOH Guidance for [Daily COVID-19 Screening of Staff and Visitors](#).

- 1. Employers should perform active fever and COVID-19 symptom screening:
 - a. On presentation for pre-embarkment quarantine or pre-deployment procedures.

- b. Daily during Pre-Embarkment/Pre-Deployment Quarantine.
 - c. Daily when working during work assignments, on a seafood vessel or in port.
 - d. Daily during Close Contact/Post-Exposure Quarantine.
 - e. On all contractors, vendors, and visitors who board a vessel or visit a worksite.
2. Temperature should ideally be measured with a no-touch thermometer.
3. Use current CDC guidelines for [COVID-19 symptoms to guide screening](#).
4. Employees conducting symptom/temperature screening should wear PPE including masks that are [fit properly](#) and eye protection.
5. Employer should maintain a symptom and temperature log which may be reviewed by LHJs or DOH in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19 on the vessel or at the workplace.

Responding to symptomatic workers: At a shore-based worksite

Any worker or visitor who reports COVID-like-symptoms or has a fever (temperature 100.4°F/ 38°C or greater) should be immediately isolated from others. Consult for medical advice if a worker is showing symptoms to determine the need for continued isolation if COVID-19 test is negative or unavailable.

1. During Pre-Deployment procedures, provide information about self-isolation to prevent infecting others and where to access healthcare and testing, if indicated.
2. During Pre-Deployment Quarantine, workers with fever or COVID-19 symptoms should be evaluated by a healthcare provider and have PCR, molecular or antigen testing for COVID-19, if indicated.
3. If working in an office or other work site on land (seafood processing/cold storage facility), immediately send the worker home with instructions to self-isolate; Alternatively, the worker could be directed to an isolation facility if available.
4. Any worker who is isolating in an employer-provided space should have daily medical checks arranged by the employer to ensure that the worker does not need additional medical evaluation or treatment.
5. If anyone who is a close contact of the sick worker develops symptoms of COVID, it should prompt additional PCR, molecular or antigen testing for COVID-19.
6. Anyone providing care, evaluation, or transportation to the isolated worker must wear appropriate PPE: [respirator, face shield, gown and gloves](#).

Responding to symptomatic workers: On a vessel

Any worker or visitor who reports [COVID-like-symptoms](#) or has a fever (temperature 100.4°F/ 38°C or greater) should be immediately isolated from others ([Section 7](#)). Consult for medical advice if a worker is showing symptoms to determine the need for continued isolation if COVID-19 test is negative or unavailable.

1. During Pre-Embarkment procedures, provide information about self-isolation to prevent infecting others and where to access healthcare and testing, if indicated.
2. During Pre-Embarkment Quarantine, workers with fever or COVID-19 symptoms should be evaluated by a healthcare provider and have PCR, molecular or antigen testing for COVID-19, if indicated. If the antigen test is positive, the individual should be placed in

isolation and confirmatory testing should be completed immediately with a molecular/PCR test.

3. While working on a vessel, a symptomatic worker should be isolated from other crew immediately and evaluated by the ship's medic.
 - a. Isolation cabin should have a separate head or restroom and should have a door that can be closed.
 - b. Place a sign on the cabin door alerting crew not to enter unless authorized.
 - c. Limit crew who enter the isolation cabin only to those who are providing care or assessing the sick person.
 - d. Meals should be delivered to the cabin. The sick person should not eat in the galley with the other crew.
 - e. If antigen testing for COVID-19 is available onboard the vessel, test the worker.
 - i. If the symptomatic worker has a positive antigen test, the individual should be placed in isolation immediately. Confirmatory testing with a molecular/PCR test should be completed as soon as possible.
 - ii. If the symptomatic worker has a negative antigen test, the individual should be placed in isolation immediately. Confirmatory testing with a molecular/PCR test should be completed as soon as possible.
 - iii. If a molecular/PCR test is NOT available, follow up with a series of 3 antigen tests administered over a 3-day period, 24 hours apart.
 - iv. If all 3 antigen tests are negative, and the individual's symptoms have resolved, they can be released from isolation.
 - v. If any of the antigen tests are positive, or if the individual reports symptoms of loss of smell or taste, or if there are other known cases of COVID-19 on board the vessel, assume they are a positive COVID-19 case and proceed with positive case response protocol.
 - f. If other testing is available on board, such as rapid influenza testing, consider testing for other illnesses.
 - g. If COVID testing is not available onboard, isolation of symptomatic individuals should last for 10 days from the start of symptoms.
4. Any worker who is isolating should have daily medical checks arranged by the employer to ensure that the worker does not need additional medical evaluation or treatment.
5. For severe illness or illness lasting > 24 hours, arrange for medical consultation and prepare to transport the sick worker.
6. If anyone who is a close contact of the sick worker develops symptoms of COVID, it should prompt additional PCR, molecular or antigen testing for COVID-19.
7. Anyone providing care, evaluation, or transportation to the isolated worker must wear appropriate PPE: respirator, face shield, gown and gloves.

Protecting the public

1. If a vessel returns to port with one or more sick crewmembers, remaining crewmembers should not be permitted to leave the vessel except to receive medical care or to move directly to a suitable isolation/quarantine location.

2. No off-vessel work is permitted.
3. Follow standard procedures for reporting to USCG.
4. A confirmed case or probable case should be reported to DOH when the vessel has left a WA Port in the past 14-days, when the vessel will be making port in a WA Port within the next 14-days, and when WA would be the transportation location for medical care regardless of whether the vessel is intending to make port in WA (for example, when the vessel is passing along WA coast with positive case/s). DOH reporting via email: doh-outbreakcoord@doh.wa.gov and via phone: **206-418-5500**. See [Section 8](#) for additional information on reporting.
5. The vessel must coordinate delivery of food or other necessities.
6. During unloading, all crew must wear gloves and face coverings or masks.
7. All face-to-face interaction between crew and shore-based workers will be kept to an absolute minimum; such as when receiving supplies, off-loading catch, fish tickets, and refueling. Those interactions that cannot be conducted remotely must follow physical distancing of at least 6 ft (about 2 meters) or more.
8. Inform shore-based workers in cold storage or processing plants that they must also wear required equipment such as gloves and face coverings or masks when unloading product.
9. A vessel with one or more confirmed cases of COVID-19, or with quarantined workers, must report that it is undergoing quarantine or has a quarantined crewmember on board if it has any contact with another vessel, a processor, or a harbormaster. Vessels are required to fly a “Lima” flag or similar yellow and black pennant if they have any crew on board under quarantine.
10. All crew must wear face coverings or masks during transportation to isolation/quarantine facilities.

Section 6: Testing for the Virus that Causes COVID-19

There are many kinds of tests that have been developed to identify the virus that causes COVID-19. Currently, DOH considers two types of tests “diagnostic tests” that can be used to confirm a case of COVID-19: molecular/PCR and antigen tests. Other types of testing, such as antibody tests, are not used to make a diagnosis of COVID-19.

Understanding COVID-19 test results

Anyone testing positive by a PCR or molecular test for the virus that causes COVID-19 is a **confirmed case of COVID-19**. Anyone testing positive by an antigen test should be confirmed with a molecular/PCR test. If molecular/PCR tests are unavailable, 3 negative antigen tests administered over a 3-day period, 24 hours apart can be used to confirm the test. If any of the antigen tests are positive or clinical considerations of loss of smell or taste are present, then that is a **confirmed case of COVID-19**.

1. Confirmed cases of COVID-19 and cases that are being confirmed through additional testing must be isolated ([Section 7](#)).

2. Cases should be immediately reported to LHJs, as required by law. A list of LHJ contacts can be found here:
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/AboutUs/PublicHealthSystem/LocalHealthJurisdictions>.
3. If sick, cases should have access to medical care.
4. Cases should be provided safe transportation to their destination (home, medical care, isolation facility, etc.) to avoid exposing others.

Report workers who test positive for COVID-19 by diagnostic testing, as mandated, to the LHJ and DOH if in port and to USCG if at sea.

If one or more workers test positive for the virus that causes COVID-19 onboard a vessel at sea, that the vessel should remain within, or immediately return to, medical flight distance in order to ensure that sick workers can access appropriate medical care as needed.

COVID-19 testing & public health

The health officer of each LHJ has the authority to specify the recommended testing strategy and LHJs will coordinate with local healthcare providers as needed. All testing is to be performed with a respiratory sample submitted for molecular/PCR or antigen testing for COVID-19.

Strategies for testing include the following:

1. **Required:** Test all symptomatic staff and workers as identified in the workplace by daily symptom screening ([Section 5](#)). Workers who test positive must be isolated ([Section 7](#)).
2. **Recommended:** Consider testing workers on vessels and in shore-based processing facilities on a regular basis as a means of monitoring for asymptomatic infections. There are several options for companies wishing to conduct continuous screening testing (CST):
 - i. If PCR or molecular testing is available, consider testing workers every SEVEN days. This could include one of two methods:
 1. Testing the entire workforce
 2. Testing a random sample of the workforce (Such as 10% or 20% of the workers on a given day). If this option is selected, be sure to test workers from various shifts and in various job roles.
 - ii. If antigen testing is available, consider testing workers every THREE days. This could include one of two methods:
 1. Testing the entire workforce
 2. Testing a random sample of the workforce (Such as 10% or 20% of the workers on a given day). If this option is selected, be sure to test workers from various shifts and in various job roles.
 - iii. Note that this option of CST is in addition to any regular testing for symptomatic workers.
 - iv. If cases are found during CST, follow normal protocols for isolating positive cases, identifying and notifying close contacts at the worksite, and working with DOH or LHJs to investigate outbreaks.

3. If a single member of a vessel or shore-based processing facility tests positive, LHJs or DOH may order testing of the entire worksite or crew on a vessel.
4. If multiple cases of COVID-19 are found in a workplace or a vessel, LHJs and DOH have the authority to temporarily close the workplace and/or order mass testing. For more information, see Section 3.3, Criteria for mass testing and temporary closure, in **Public Health COVID-19 Guidance: Non-Healthcare Workplaces in Washington State:** <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/420-284-Guidance-NonHC-Workplace.pdf>.
5. If employers have questions about testing plans for a vessel, they should contact DOH. If employers have questions about testing plans for a shore-based processing facility, they should contact LHJs.

For additional information, refer to CDC guidelines on testing strategies for COVID-19 in [High-Density Critical Infrastructure Workplaces](#).

Section 7: Responding to Cases of COVID-19

If one or more cases of COVID-19 is identified among workers or crew, immediate action must be taken to prevent or limit further spread in the worksite – whether on a vessel or in a shore-based facility. Actions include isolation and/or quarantine of sick and exposed workers, reporting to the appropriate authorities, and cleaning/sanitizing the workplace.

Employers should identify appropriate isolation/quarantine facilities in advance. For questions about requirements for an appropriate isolation/quarantine facility for shore-based processor facilities, employers are encouraged to reach out to the local health jurisdiction of the intended isolation/quarantine facility. For questions about requirements for an appropriate isolation/quarantine facility for vessels using Washington state facilities, employers are encouraged to reach out to the Department of Health.

Note that LHJs and DOH have limited capacity to meet isolation/quarantine needs. Employers should develop plans for isolation/quarantine of all staff that do not rely on public health facilities. L&I has a document that outlines [temporary housing standards for workers](#).

Isolation

1. Implement immediate isolation for any person who tests positive via diagnostic test for COVID-19, whether they are symptomatic or asymptomatic.
 - a. Symptomatic cases: Isolation should last until ALL of the following conditions are met:
 - i. At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, and
 - ii. Symptoms have improved.
 - b. For persons who are asymptomatic, maintain isolation until 10 days after positive test was obtained.
 - c. Any worker who is isolating in employer provided spaces, should have daily medical checks arranged by the employer to ensure that the worker does not need additional medical evaluation or treatment.

- d. Isolation may be at home as long as the following conditions are met:
 - i. Worker can be transported to their home without using public transportation.
 - ii. The infected worker can maintain isolation at home without infecting others in the home. Public health can evaluate whether the home meets criteria for safe isolation.
 - iii. Worker receives education about symptom monitoring and what to do if symptoms worsen.
 - iv. The local health jurisdiction where the worker will isolate is notified in advance of the worker being allowed to travel.
- e. Isolation may be at a hotel or other designated facility, as long the following conditions are met:
 - i. The employer has made prior arrangements to make sure that the hotel or other designated facility is available and meets below requirements when there is a possibility that it will be needed.
 - ii. The facility or hotel is set up to allow isolation and has established policies to support isolation of people who test positive for COVID-19.
 - iii. Isolated workers must follow facility or hotel policies.
 - iv. Isolated workers have a separate entrance from that for the general public.
 - v. Isolated workers should not share a room with someone who has NOT tested positive for COVID-19.
 - vi. Workers remain in their room as much as possible.
 - vii. Workers are required to wear a mask anytime they leave their room.
 - viii. All workers' needs are provided. L&I has a document that outlines [temporary housing standards for workers](#). The needs include:
 - 1. Basic living standards – bed and bedding, lights, heat, running water, toilet and bathing facilities, laundry, garbage service.
 - 2. Meals that accommodate dietary restrictions (gluten free, vegetarian, no pork, etc.).
 - 3. Daily symptom screening, healthcare consultation, and access to treatment and testing as necessary.
- 2. Isolation on a vessel:
 - a. If a crewmember is identified as a potential COVID-19 case, immediately ask them to put on a mask, and place them in a private room with the door closed.
- 3. Discontinuing isolation:
 - a. Workers who are symptomatic for COVID-19 may discontinue isolation under the following conditions:
 - i. At least **10 days have passed since symptoms started**, and
 - ii. The worker has not had a fever for at least 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medications) and,
 - iii. Other symptoms have improved.
 - b. Workers who tested positive but never developed symptoms may discontinue isolation after **10 days from their first positive PCR, molecular or antigen test**.

- c. If a worker on a vessel is critical to the safe operation of a vessel (fishing and fish processing is not considered critical to safe operation of a vessel) and no other individual can do their work the individual may be allowed to leave isolation to perform critical safety operational tasks. They must wear a respirator, disinfecting and cleaning protocols listed below must be followed everywhere they go, and they should have no contact with any other crew. All crew should be notified to not enter the areas where the COVID-19 positive individual is located to reduce transmission risk. This should only happen if no other safe operations alternatives are available. If critical workforce become ill with COVID-19, the vessel should return to the nearest port and contact USCG.
- d. According to the CDC, a test-based strategy is no longer recommended to determine when to discontinue isolation for workers in non-healthcare settings. For more information, visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>

Quarantine

1. Implement quarantine for any workers who have close contact with a confirmed case.
2. For crew or workers on a vessel, assume that all crew have had close contact.
3. Quarantine should last for 14-days from the date of their last exposure to the confirmed case or cases.
 - a. Workers on seafood vessels are not eligible for shortened quarantine options of less than 14 days.
 - b. Monitored Quarantine: Quarantine for exposed workers may be at a hotel or other designated facility, as long the following conditions are met:
 - i. The facility or hotel is set up to allow quarantine and has established policies to support quarantine of people who may have been exposed to COVID-19.
 - ii. Quarantined workers must follow facility or hotel policies.
 - iii. Quarantined worker(s) can be transported to the quarantine facility without using public or commercial transportation.
 - iv. Quarantined worker(s) wear an appropriate cloth face covering or mask at all times while travelling to quarantine location.
 - v. Quarantined worker(s) should be quarantined in a single-occupancy room if possible.
 - vi. If single-occupancy quarantine rooms are not available:
 1. Limit the number of people sharing rooms in a quarantine setting.
 2. If workers must be quarantined together, avoid creating quarantine groups of more than ten workers in congregate settings (such as bunk houses).
 3. Ensure that quarantined workers are not sharing rooms with people who are on isolation after a positive COVID-19 test.

- vii. Facility has a separate entrance from the general public for the quarantined workers.
- viii. Workers should remain in their room/quarantine accommodations unless they need to leave for medical care.
- ix. Workers are required to wear a cloth face covering or mask anytime they leave their room, unless they are actively eating, drinking, or performing personal hygiene.
 - 1. Smoking is bad for individual's health and not recommended. If smoke breaks are occurring, then a physically distant place to smoke should be set up. Individuals cannot be without a mask within 6 feet of another in a designated smoking site. Sites should be limited to 2 people at a time, physically distanced at least 6 ft apart. If possible, plexiglass barriers between the 2 people should be put in place.
- x. All quarantined workers' needs are provided. L&I has a document that outlines [temporary housing standards for workers](#). The needs include:
 - 1. Basic living standards – bed and bedding, toilet, lights, heat, running water, bathing facilities, laundry, garbage service
 - 2. Accommodation for dietary restrictions (gluten free, vegetarian, no pork, etc.).
 - 3. Daily symptom screening, healthcare consultation, as well as access to treatment and testing as necessary.
- c. Controlled Quarantine: Quarantine may be at home as long as the following conditions are met:
 - i. Quarantined worker(s) can be transported to their home(s) using safe transportation and without using public transportation.
 - ii. Quarantined worker(s) wear an appropriate cloth face covering or mask at all times while travelling to quarantine location.
 - iii. Worker receives education about symptom monitoring and what to do if symptoms occur.
 - iv. The local health jurisdiction where the worker will quarantine is notified in advance of the worker being allowed to travel.
- d. In critical workforce sectors, exposed workers without symptoms may continue working during their quarantine period in very limited circumstances, when it is necessary to preserve the function of critical infrastructure workplaces.
 - i. If a worker on a vessel is critical to the safe operation of a vessel (fishing and fish processing is not considered critical to safe operation of a vessel) and no other individual can do their work the individual may be allowed to leave quarantine to perform critical safety operational tasks. They must wear a respirator, disinfecting and cleaning protocols listed below must be followed everywhere they go, and they should have no contact with any other crew. All crew should be notified to not enter the areas where the quarantined worker is located to reduce transmission risk. This should only happen if no other safe operations alternatives are available.

- ii. The above can only occur as long as the worker remains asymptomatic and does not have a positive test for COVID-19. If critical workforce become ill with COVID-19, the vessel should return to the nearest port and contact the USCG.
- e. In addition, **all** of the following must be place at the work site:
 - i. Daily work fever and symptom screening for all workers.
 - ii. Cloth face coverings or masks are used by all workers.
 - iii. Physical distancing measures are in place.
 - iv. Cleaning/disinfection of the workspace occurs per state/CDC guidance.
- f. For crew and workers on seafood processing vessels, the above criteria will likely not be possible, due to challenges in maintaining physical distancing onboard a vessel. In these circumstances, exposed workers whose jobs are not essential to the safe operation of the ship may NOT work during their 14-day quarantine period. Processing seafood on a vessel is not considered essential to safe ship operation.
- g. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced guidance that fully vaccinated persons with an exposure to someone with COVID-19 are **not** required to quarantine if they meet all of the following criteria:
 - Are fully vaccinated (had both doses, and at least two weeks have passed since the second dose).
 - Received last dose within three months.
 - Have not had symptoms since current COVID-19 exposure.

Fully vaccinated persons should still watch for symptoms for 14 days after their exposure. They should also continue to wear masks, practice social distancing, and keep their social circles small. An exception to the guidance is that vaccinated inpatients and residents in healthcare settings should continue to quarantine following an exposure to someone with COVID-19. Persons who do not meet all three criteria should continue to follow [current quarantine guidance](#) after exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
- h. Shore-based processor employers should contact their local health jurisdiction for questions about these policies. Vessel employers should contact Department of Health for questions about these policies.

Cleaning and disinfection after a COVID-19 case is identified

After a COVID-19 case is identified in a workplace, cleaning and disinfection should be performed in the worksite to prevent transmission to others from contaminated objects and surfaces.

1. Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
 - a. Companies do not necessarily need to close operations, if they can close off affected areas.
2. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.
3. Wait 24 hours before you clean or disinfect. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.

4. Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as staterooms, bathrooms, common areas, work equipment, and shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and automated teller machines.
5. Workers performing cleaning/sanitation should be wearing appropriate PPE at all times.
6. Vacuum the space if needed. Use vacuum equipped with high-efficiency particular air (HEPA) filter, if available.
 - a. Do not vacuum a room or space that has people in it. Wait until the room or space is empty to vacuum, such as at night, for common spaces, or during the day for private rooms.
 - b. Consider temporarily turning off room fans and the central HVAC system that services the room or space, so that particles that escape from vacuuming will not circulate throughout the facility.
7. Once area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use. Workers without close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection.
8. If more than 7 days since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary. Continue routine cleaning and disinfection. This includes everyday practices that businesses and communities normally use to maintain a healthy environment.
9. The CDC's website has more information about [cleaning and disinfection for COVID-19](#).

Section 8: Reporting Cases and Working with Public Health

In the event of one or more COVID-19 cases on a seafood vessel or worksite, the company will need to cooperate with LHJs and/or DOH, as well as other federal agencies.

All cases of COVID-19 and outbreaks must be reported to the LHJ per Washington state law ([WAC 246-101](#)).

Background

All employers must cooperate with public health authorities, per the Governor's proclamation ([20-25.12](#)) issued on January 11, 2021. This proclamation requires all employers to (a) cooperate with public health authorities in the investigation of cases, suspected cases, outbreaks, and suspected outbreaks of COVID-19; (b) cooperate with the implementation of infection control measures, including but not limited to isolation and quarantine and following the cleaning guidelines set by the CDC to deep clean and sanitize; (c) comply with all public health authority orders and directives; and (d) comply with all L&I interpretive guidance, regulations, and rules and L&I-administered statutes.

As per the Governor's proclamation ([20-25.12](#)), employers are also required to cooperate with public health authorities by: (e) returning phone calls within 4 hours; (f) meeting with public health officials promptly and answering questions from public health officials to help determine if and where transmission might be occurring in the work place; (g) sharing lists of employees with their contact information and other relevant documents, if requested; (h) allowing immediate and unfettered access to any work place and facility, as well as to all employees

without threatened or actual retaliation against those employees; (i) following public health recommendations for testing and disease control measures; and (j) engaging in respectful and productive conversations regarding public health interactions.

How to report cases of COVID-19 by worksite

The process to report one or more cases of COVID-19 will vary depending on the workplace setting.

Shore-based seafood facilities (processing and aquaculture)

When TWO OR MORE cases of COVID-19 occur within a 14-day period in a shore-based processing facility or at an aquaculture company in WA, this outbreak should be reported to the local health jurisdiction immediately, following LHJ and L&I reporting timeline requirements.

When workers live in [temporary worker housing](#), when ONE OR MORE cases of COVID-19 occur within a 14-day period in a shore-based processing facility or at an aquaculture company in WA, this outbreak should be reported to the local health jurisdiction immediately following LHJ and L&I reporting timeline requirements

A list of all [local health jurisdiction](#) contacts can be found on the DOH website. For more information about working with your LHJ during a COVID-19 outbreak in your facility, see DOH's [COVID-19 Guidance: Non-Healthcare Workplaces in Washington State](#). Be prepared to provide LHJs with the following information for all cases:

1. Name
2. Date of birth
3. Race/Ethnicity
4. Type of COVID Test
5. Date of positive test
6. Date of symptom onset
7. Home address
8. Working phone number
9. Preferred language spoken
10. If the positive case has traveled recently, details of recent travel, including type of travel, dates, airline & flight number
11. Isolation facility name, address, and phone number
12. Information about any close contacts of the case(s)

See attached spreadsheet for a reporting template ([Appendix A](#)).

Commercial seafood vessel operators – Cases of COVID-19 during pre-embarkment quarantine

When ONE OR MORE CASES of COVID-19 are identified via testing during the 14-day pre-departure or pre-employment quarantine taking place in WA for crew of large processor or catcher/processor vessels, the company should notify the Washington State Department of Health.

Notify DOH of any identified cases via email within 72 hours. Email for notification: doh-outbreakcoord@doh.wa.gov. Be prepared to provide DOH with the following information:

1. Name
2. Date of birth
3. Race/Ethnicity
4. Type of COVID Test
5. Date of positive test
6. Date of symptom onset
7. Home address
8. Working phone number
9. Preferred language spoken
10. If the positive case has traveled recently, details of recent travel, including type of travel, dates, airline & flight number
11. Isolation facility name, address, and phone number
12. Information about any close contacts of the case(s)
13. After the initial report is made to the LHJ, including a list of cases, continue to report additional cases as they occur.

See attached spreadsheet for a reporting template ([Appendix A](#)).

Commercial seafood vessel operators – Cases of COVID-19 during vessel operation when returning to a Washington Port

When a commercial fishing vessel is planning to arrive in WA with ONE OR MORE workers who test positive for COVID-19, the company should report positive cases as soon as possible to the Washington State Department of Health, as well as the US Coast Guard.

Commercial fishing vessel operators are required by law to report probable or confirmed cases of COVID-19 that occur at sea to the USCG as required under [33 CFR 160.216](#), and to the CDC as required by [42 CFR 71.21](#).

Reporting to DOH should be made immediately via telephone when ONE OR MORE positive cases are identified onboard a vessel, if the vessel is in WA waters and/or if the vessel will be returning to a port in WA. Phone number for reporting to DOH: **206-418-5500**. It is vital that incoming vessels notify DOH of an incoming vessel with ONE OR MORE cases of COVID-19 on board to allow for adequate notification and preparation. Be prepared to provide DOH with the following information for case(s):

1. Name
2. Date of birth
3. Race/Ethnicity
4. Type of COVID Test
5. Date of positive test
6. Date of symptom onset
7. Home address
8. Working phone number
9. Preferred language spoken

10. If the positive case has traveled recently, details of recent travel, including type of travel, dates, airline & flight number
11. Planned isolation facility name, address, and phone number
12. Assume all crew onboard the vessel are potentially exposed to the case or cases.
13. After the initial report is made to DOH, including a list of cases, continue to report additional cases as they occur.

See attached spreadsheet for a reporting template ([Appendix A](#)).

Working with public health

Employers are required by law to cooperate with any case investigation or contact tracing efforts undertaken by LHJs and/or DOH.

1. The local health officer has authority to issue health orders which may be enforced by the USCG local sector to restrict movement of a vessel in order to compel compliance with a public health investigation as outlined in [WAC 246-100-070](#).
2. The LHJs and/or DOH may open a formal case investigation and contact tracing process coordinated with the employer.
3. When one or more cases is identified associated with a workplace the employer should:
 - a. Take immediate action to identify workers who may have had close contact with the confirmed case (being within 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) from two days before symptom onset or 2 days before test was obtained until the case was isolated. If the case was on a ship while contagious, all others on the vessel should be considered exposed.
 - b. Work with LHJs or DOH if there is a worksite contact investigation.
 - c. After the initial report is made to LHJs or to DOH, including a list of cases, continue to report additional cases as they occur.
4. Employers must notify their workers that a case has been identified at the worksite without naming the person who tested positive.
 - a. Inform workers that they may have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for the virus that causes COVID-19. It is appropriate to give details such as: dates, shifts the person worked, locations within the worksite, etc.
 - b. Remind exposed workers of symptoms of COVID-19 (see [Section 3](#)) and ask them to report any symptoms that develop during post exposure quarantine.
 - c. Instruct workers that if symptoms develop at home, they should not report to their next shift. Instead direct them to notify the appropriate point of contact in the workplace (such as their supervisor, HR personnel, or the designated COVID-19 contact at the worksite).

Section 9: Additional resources

CDC and other federal guidance

- **Symptoms of Coronavirus:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

- **CDC COVID-19 website:** www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/
- **CDC Interim Guidance for Businesses and Employers: Plan, Prepare and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019:** www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html
- **CDC Recommendations for Cloth Face Covers:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover.html>
- **CDC guidelines for Protecting Seafood Processing Workers from COVID-19:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-seafood-processing.html>
- **CDC Tools for Cross-Cultural Communication and Language Access:** <https://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/culture.html>
- **CDC Testing Strategy for Coronavirus (COVID-19) in High-Density Critical Infrastructure Workplaces after a COVID-19 Case Is Identified** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/worker-safety-support/hd-testing.html>
- **NIOSH Coronavirus Disease 2019 website:** www.cdc.gov/niosh/emres/2019_ncov.html
- **CDC Guidelines for Meat and Poultry Processing Employers and Workers:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/meat-poultry-processing-workers-employers.html>
- **CDC Resources for Shared or Congregate Housing Facilities:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/sharedcongregate-house/index.html>
- **CDC guidelines for Cleaning and Disinfection for Non-emergency Transport Vehicles:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/disinfecting-transport-vehicles.html>
- **CDC Interim Guidance for Ships on Managing Suspected Coronavirus Disease 2019:** <https://www.cdc.gov/quarantine/maritime/recommendations-for-ships.html>
- **MMWR: COVID-19 Among Workers in Meat and Poultry Processing Facilities:** <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/pdfs/mm6918e3-H.pdf>
- **US Department of Homeland Security: Critical Infrastructure guidance (Including Food and Agriculture Sector):** [https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Version 3.0 CISA Guidance on Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers 1.pdf](https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Version_3.0_CISA_Guidance_on_Essential_Critical_Infrastructure_Workers_1.pdf)
- **OSHA Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19:** <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>
- **EPA List N: Disinfectants for use against SARS-COV-2:** <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

Washington State Guidance

- **Washington DOH COVID-19 website:** <https://www.doh.wa.gov/emergencies/coronavirus>
- **Local Health Jurisdiction Contacts:** <https://www.doh.wa.gov/AboutUs/PublicHealthSystem/LocalHealthJurisdictions>

- **Public Health COVID-19 Guidance: Non-Healthcare Workplaces in Washington State:** <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/5100/420-284-Guidance-NonHC-Workplace.pdf>
- **COVID-19 education materials in 26 languages:** <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/NovelCoronavirusOutbreak2020/HealthEducation>
- **Guidance for Daily COVID-19 Screening of Staff and Visitors:** <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/coronavirus/Employervisitorscreeningguidance.pdf>
- **Guidance on Developing a COVID-19 Safety Plan for Critical Infrastructure:** <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1600/coronavirus/COVID19GuidanceDevelopingSafetyPlan.pdf>
- **Guidance on COVID-19 Testing:** <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/NovelCoronavirusOutbreak2020COVID19/TestingforCOVID19>
- **DOSH Directive: General Coronavirus Prevention Under Stay Home-Stay Healthy Order Updated: May 15, 2020:** <https://lni.wa.gov/safety-health/safety-rules/enforcement-policies/DD170.pdf>
- **Washington Department of Labor & Industry (LNI) Coronavirus (COVID-19) Prevention in Agriculture and Related Industries:** <https://www.lni.wa.gov/forms-publications/F414-165-000.pdf>
- **Washington Department of Labor & Industry (LNI) Food Processing-Warehouse Coronavirus (COVID-19) Fact Sheet:** <https://www.lni.wa.gov/forms-publications/F414-166-000.pdf>
- **Washington Coronavirus Hazard Considerations for Employers (except COVID-19 care in hospitals & clinics):** Face coverings, masks, and respirator choices: <https://www.lni.wa.gov/agency/docs/wacoronavirushazardconsiderationsemployers.pdf>
- **DOH and LNI Joint Rules CR-103E Adoption Language link to the LNI version (same as DOH):** <https://lni.wa.gov/rulemaking-activity/AO20-09/2009CR103EAdoption.pdf>
- **LNI Temporary Housing for Workers:** <https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=296-833>

More COVID-19 Information and Resources

Stay up-to-date on the [current COVID-19 situation in Washington](#), [Governor Inslee's proclamations](#), [symptoms](#), [how it spreads](#), and [how and when people should get tested](#). See our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information.

A person's race/ethnicity or nationality does not, itself, put them at greater risk of COVID-19. However, data are revealing that communities of color are being disproportionately impacted by COVID-19- this is due to the effects of racism, and in particular, structural racism, that leaves some groups with fewer opportunities to protect themselves and their communities. [Stigma will not help to fight the illness](#). Share accurate information with others to keep rumors and misinformation from spreading.

- [WA State Department of Health 2019 Novel Coronavirus Outbreak \(COVID-19\)](#)

- [WA State Coronavirus Response \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Find Your Local Health Department or District](#)
- [CDC Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Stigma Reduction Resources](#)

Have more questions about COVID-19? Call our hotline: **1-800-525-0127**, Monday – Friday, 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., Weekends: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. For interpretative services, **press #** when they answer and **say your language**. For questions about your own health, COVID-19 testing, or testing results, please contact a health care provider.

To request this document in another format, call 1-800-525-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 ([Washington Relay](#)) or email civil.rights@doh.wa.gov.

Appendix A: Example “Line List” for reporting cases of COVID-19

See attached excel file.